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SUBJECT: UNGA THIRD COMMITTEE DEMARCHE RESPONSE: ST.  
VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

REF: STATE 108921

1. (SBU) CDA conveyed reftel points to St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves and Foreign Minister Louis Straker in meetings October 26. PM Gonsalves said he was displeased with the images of abuse displayed during Iran's recent presidential election, adding that his June 2009 trip to Tehran showed an apparent lack of religious diversity. He noted specifically that his desire to learn more about the Bahai community in Iran was met with a the response from Iranian president Ahmadinijad that, occasionally, the Bahai faith was used as cover for Israeli intelligence officers. With respect to the Third Committee, Gonsalves said that, in principle, he had no problem with debate, and that his instinct was to allow an open discussion of all issues.

2. (SBU) Separately, FM Straker agreed generally with the points expressed verbally and via non-paper, but reminded CDA that the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (GOSVG) was developing relations with Iran. "You know our situation," he said, alluding to the GOSVG's attempts to garner financial support from Iran and other countries for the ongoing Argyle International Airport construction project. This effort to secure funding -- which had yet to bear fruit -- prompted the GOSVG to shift its vote on the substantive Iran resolution from in favor to abstention last year, and Straker's comment made clear this was not likely to change as long as there was a chance of securing Iranian financial support for the government's signature project.

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